



# The Home Department

Conducted by  
Helen Watts McKee

## After the Wedding.

We're married, they say, and you think you have won me:  
Well, take this white veil from my brow and look on me.  
Here's matter to vex you, and matter to grieve you;  
Here's doubt to distrust you, and faith to believe you.  
I'm all as you see—common earth, common dew—  
Be wary and mould me to roses, not rue.  
Ah, shake out the filmy thing, fold after fold,  
And see if you have me to keep and to hold;  
Look close on my heart; see the worst of its sinning—  
Is it not yours today, for the yesterday's winning?  
The past is not mine—I am too proud to borrow—  
You must grow to new heights if I love you tomorrow.  
We're married. I'm plighted to hold up your praises  
As the turf at your feet does its handful of daisies;  
That way lies my honor, my pathway, my pride;  
But mark me—if greener grass grows either side,  
I shall know it; and keeping in body with you,  
Shall walk with my spirit-feet out in the dew.  
We're married. Oh, pray that our love do not fail.  
I have wings flattered down and hid under my veil:  
They are subtle as light—you can never undo them;  
And swift in their flight—you can never pursue them;  
And spite of all clasping, and spite of all bands,  
I can slip, like a shadow, a dream, from your hands.  
Nay, call me not cruel, and fear not to take me—  
I am yours, for all time, to be just what you make me;  
To wear my white veil for a sign or a cover,  
As you shall be proven my lord or my lover;  
A cover for peace that is dead, or a token  
Of bliss than can never be written or spoken.  
—Alice Carey.

## Anniversary.

Friends, do you know that, with this issue of The Commoner, I have been with you a whole year? Fifty-two times it has been my pleasant privilege to meet with you as your editor; and I have so wanted to be helpful—to make myself useful to you. Whether or not I have succeeded, and to what extent, it is for you to say.

Many of you have sent me kindly messages; many have sent helpful words, and I am grateful. Your kindly suggestions have given me new thoughts, and encouraged me to seek a higher standard for my work. In the past, I told you that, although I could not, for myself, claim great wisdom, I should seek to know a great deal that I might thus be able to serve you acceptably. To enable me to do this, I asked you to write to me, kindly suggesting ways in which I might make our Department a source of greater interest and a mine of housewifely wisdom. In thus co-operating, we shall be able to give aid to the inexperienced, to cheer the discouraged, strengthen the weak, support

the fainting, lift the fallen, ease the burden, lighten the load and counsel the heedless. The Home is the heart of the world, and if the heart is healthy, wholesome and pure, the social body will be better able to withstand the attack of moral diseases, and we shall grow better, broader, wiser and greater in all ways.

The invitation is still in force. I shall be glad of your suggestions, and avail myself of your kindly helpfulness. Many of you speak in warm terms of praise of The Commoner, and say, "I shall be glad to help The Commoner in any way I can." This is one of the many ways—let us know how you think we can make it more helpful, more servicable to the home. If I am permitted to be with you another year, I hope to grow closer to your hearts, as you have to mine, and to so broaden and extend the usefulness of our department that it shall be deemed a necessity in your family life. The field is wide; the work prolific of much good. Let us work together.

## Our June Brides.

The printed page is full of advice to this class of our daughters, and, much of it is so impracticable as to be discouraging to the young wife who is ambitious to keep the love of her husband. In no less than five papers lying before me as I write, the young wife is assured that she must positively, under all circumstances, meet her young husband with a smile. Her own troubles and worries must be carefully hidden, no matter how serious their nature. "John" must not know that she has any. But she must listen, smilingly, of course, to all of his. He should feel free to tell her all his business perplexities, and she must enter fully into the spirit of them, sympathizing with him, and accepting all his plans with wifely zest. If he gets to staying out of nights, she must not question him, or allow him to know that she notices it. She must "wear the little bow in her hair which caught his fancy," as her lover; the colors he liked she must be sure to wear, even about her work, and that work, whatever its character, should, according to these advisors, be invariably performed in a dress of immaculate neatness and daintiness of fitting.

## O O

I always imagine, on reading such advices, that the writer has failed to take his (?) own prescription. If John has a mother and sisters, and knows anything about domestic matters, he will know how impossible it is for the average woman—even one of large practical experience—to do the work of the house in a "spotless gown," unless she have a goodly quantity of them and can do, or hire done, a large amount of laundering; and even then, Angelica is more apt than not, in her unskilled handling of smudgey cooking vessels, to get a good many smutty dabs on her face, hands and gown during her "battle for bread." Some women, I must admit, can go through the whole kitchen performance and come out of it "unspotted from the contest," not even the "smell of the smoke" clinging to her garments, but they are few. I should advise that the experimental housekeeper be supplied with a goodly supply of big gingham aprons, oversleeves, or comfortably fitted work dresses, warranted to wash, and that she lay aside the dainty lawns until the dinner

dishes are safely on their shelves. If John is a sensible fellow—and of course he is—he will think she is far prettier in her comfortable print gown as she goes about her household duties, than she possibly could be in a stained and rumpled lawn or untidy silk. Be just as pretty and as neat as you can, dears, but do dress sensibly and comfortably.

## O O

No, girls, don't imagine that you can live your life apart from John's life; you must learn to bear each other's burdens, and thus lighten both. Be just as cheerful, hopeful, optimistic as you may; let your daily trials and perplexities worry you as little as possible, using them as stepping-stones to a higher plane. You will find many discouragements; make many failures; so will John. You will also, each of you have many pleasant, cheering successes; make the most of both, and it will do no harm to talk them over with each other. Remember, it should be no more "I" or "mine," but "we" and "ours." Bear ye one another's burdens, and bear them lovingly, encouragingly; do not forget that "ye are yoke-fellows," and to insure the true pulling, each must keep your own trace-chain taut. You must "pull together," and in order to do this, it is necessary that each should know the strength of the other. Your business, henceforth, is John's business; his business is yours.

## Sick Babies.

It has been said that no better investment of public money could be made than to employ a sufficient number of competent physicians and nurses to take charge of ignorant mothers and teach them how not to kill their babies. Given, the best of medical advice, and the general oversight of a trained nurse, and, ten chances to one, the ignorance of the mother will outwit them and succeed in killing the babe; while undoubtedly loving them devotedly, and making every sacrifice in her power, her lamentable lack of sanitary methods will work great hardships on her children. It is a pitiable thing that women are allowed to assume the duties of caring for a delicate human life while, many times, not knowing the first and simplest rules pertaining thereto.

It is difficult to give, on the printed page, even general rules, applicable to all cases. Every babe is an individual, and calls for individual treatment, and the health and well-being of the little morsel of humanity depends almost altogether on the intelligence of the mother.

## O O

Statistics tell us that the majority of all children who die in hot weather are under one year of age, and one-third of all the children born die before the age of five years. Instead of discussing how to increase the number of births, it would be well to give time, thought and money to the study of how to keep alive those already born. It is not always the delicate, sickly child who succumbs to diseases of the hot weather months. A great deal depends upon the clothing, as well as upon the diet, and constant oversight in many particulars is the price to be paid for baby's health. Clothing too hot, too rough, or unclean, as well as too scant and unsuitable to the hour and atmosphere, cause untold mischief. Unsuitable, or ill-advised diet brings on indigestion, and thus opens the

door for a train of evils, which the untrained intelligence of most mothers is powerless to resist.

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The majority of deaths occurring during the summer months are said to be from the ranks of bottle-fed children, and the greatest care should be taken by the mother of her own health, that she may be able to nurse her child. But in many cases, this is impossible, and the child's life, or at smallest, its comfort, is the result. Only very general rules for their care can be given, and the mother must not too fearlessly pin her faith to the directions found in her favorite magazine, but this rule will apply to all cases: The baby must be kept clean and comfortable; its clothing must be neither too thick nor too thin; must be added to or taken from to suit the varying temperature of the hours. A garment that would be too cool in the early morning hours might be too hot and too heavy for the noon-time, while another change might be necessary before the evening. A thin, soft, silky woolen garment next to the skin is better than the thinnest cotton garment, as it will prevent the too rapid evaporation of heat, maintaining a more even temperature than any other material will do. The temperature over the little stomach and bowels should be given particular attention to. The clothing should be loose, and the little feet and legs kept warm.

## O O

A daily tepid bath, in slightly salted water (with very little, if any, of some pure, unmedicated soap) should not be neglected. Where the tubbing is not practicable, a daily tepid sponge bath may be given, but the atmosphere of the room must be such that the child will feel no chill. The baby, in health or sickness, must be protected from sudden shocks, however slight. Absolute cleanliness must be maintained. No excoriations from wet or soiled napkins must be allowed. Sometimes the mother's milk does not agree with the child, but this is the exception, and, in any case, where the child is "bottle-fed," trouble may be looked for. Here, too, absolute cleanliness in regard to the bottle, tubing and nipple must be strictly observed. The effect of the milk or other food given should be carefully watched. It would be better on the least sign of disagreement, to experiment carefully, asking the advice of some physician who is known to be successful in the treatment of children's diseases. Do not neglect to give even a nursing child frequent spoonfuls of pure, cold water.

## Food For Children.

When the mother's milk fails; a very good substitute may be made as follows: One tablespoonful of perfectly sweet cream, two of cow's milk, four of water, one of lime water, and one of sugar of milk.

In artificial diet, no two babies may be fed alike. This will not agree with all children. Some children thrive wonderfully on the undiluted milk of a young, fresh cow. Barley water, albumen water, whey are all recommended. For whey diet, to one pint of milk, use a teaspoonful of pepsin, or rennet. Put in a double boiler on the stove, and let stand until the whey rises to the top; break up the curds with a fork and strain through coarse muslin. Add ten grains of bicarbonate of soda to a pint of the whey, thus rendering it alkaline. Add a teaspoonful of the sugar of milk to a pint of whey, put it in a bottle, cork with a piece of absorbent cotton, and Pasteurize—sterilize at a low temperature—before using.

To prepare albumen water: To a teacupful of pure water add the white of one egg, stirring it into the water, but do not beat the egg; add a pinch of salt and strain through muslin.